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RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 8345
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3274
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 2282
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 6122
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2520
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2007

In Today's Papers

Baydemir Investigated

All papers report the Diyarbakir Prosecutor's Office has initiated an investigation into the remarks by Osman Baydemir, the Kurdish DTP mayor of Diyarbakir, for accusing Prime Minister Erdogan and Agriculture Minister Mehdi Eker of "declaring war on Diyarbakir," saying he won't run away from a fight. Baydemir said there is "negative discrimination" against the city, adding "Diyarbakir is a fortress and cannot be conquered." Eker had said earlier the municipal services are not good in Diyarbakir, adding municipality functions should be entrusted to capable people.

Addressing the ruling AKP lawmakers in the parliament yesterday, Erdogan categorically rejected the claims, stressing that his government invested Turkish Lira 5.5 billion in the southeast. Erdogan also warned against escalation of ethnic chauvinism and manipulation of Turkish people's nationalistic feelings.

The nationalist MHP directed criticism against the government, saying its soft stance on separatist terrorism had encouraged the mayor to make such a statement. Diyarbakir MP Akin Birdal, a member of the mainly Kurdish DTP, said Baydemir, as the mayor of Diyarbakir, is showing his reaction to the fact that the city cannot get aid.

Liberal Radikal reports Baydemir accuses the AKP government of blocking development projects in southeast Turkey. During a visit to Diyarbakir in 2005, Erdogan was given a report on deadlocked projects according to which municipalities in the region had secured various international loans and donations for urbanization work. Germany, for example, has agreed with Diyarbakir Municipality to extend Euro 500,000 for a waste disposal management project, but the State Planning Organization rejected the deal saying similar projects could be carried out only with funds extended by the state-owned IlBank. A Spain-sponsored project for the rehabilitation of the Tigris Valley was also rejected by the State

Planning Organization because the project was not included in the investment program for 2005. A Deutsche Bank-backed tram project for Diyarbakir was also blocked by IlBank.

State Receivership to Sell Sabah, ATV

All papers report Ahmet Erturk, head of the Savings and Deposit Insurance Fund (TMSF) said Tuesday an auction will be held November 7 in Istanbul for the sale of the Ciner Group-owned mass-circulation newspaper Sabah and top-rated entertainment broadcaster ATV. Erturk expects the sale to bring in between USD 1-1.5 billion.

A total of 73 assets were seized by TMSF from Ciner Group after secret deals between the companies' previous owner Dinc Bilgin and

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Ciner came to light. The sale is expected to shake up Turkey's media sector dominated by the Dogan Group, which has 40 percent of the advertising market in the country. Analysts said the auction would bring strong interest from abroad as the advertising market in Turkey is growing fast. In Turkey, a law restricts foreign ownership of broadcasters to 25 percent, with no limit for print media.

Maliki Complains to Bush about Turkey

Hurriyet, Milliyet, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others report that during his visit to Iraq, President Bush met with the Iraqi leaders President Talabani, Prime Minister al-Maliki and the Sunni representative al-Hashimi in al-Anbar province. Maliki complained to President Bush about Iranian and Turkish shelling of northern Iraq, and also pointed to the Turkish military buildup along the border, according to papers.

Ankara Forum to Open Office in Jerusalem

Islamist-oriented Zaman reports the sixth meeting of the Ankara Forum, which brings together Turkish, Israeli and Palestinian

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businessmen, was held in East Jerusalem on Tuesday. Rifat Hisarciklioglu, chairman of Turkish Union of Chambers (TOBB) said joint industrial zones creating new business opportunities in the West Bank would be established. The Forum businessmen agreed to open a permanent office in East Jerusalem. The Turkish delegation paid a visit to President Shimon Peres and will meet Wednesday with President Mahmoud Abbas and Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad.

American University in Northern Iraq

Mainstream Sabah reports an American University has been created in the Kurdish city of Suleymaniye in northern Iraq which will begin classes in its temporary facilities in October. The university will be fully operational in 2009. President Talabani, in Suleymaniye with Ambassador Ryan Crocker, donated USD 10 million whereas US Congress will extend USD 40 million for the project.

Editorial Commentary on Iraq

Yilmaz Oztuna writes in the conservative-nationalist Turkiye: Who would have thought that the situation in Iraq would be this bad? What happened to the super power US's Greater Middle East Project? This project will never be realized. The US has created an Iraq worse than it was in Saddam's time. Hundreds and thousands of people have died. The possibility that Iraq will be divided into two or three is increasing. Trillions of dollars have been wasted. The Muslim world's most sacred works of art have been looted and destroyed. This is the general picture of Iraq, but, we should evaluate the situation from the Pentagon and White House angle: The US's first target was the oil reserves in the Middle East. They managed to get a hold of the reserves in Iraq. The second aim was to eliminate the three enemies of Israel: Iraq, Iran and Syria. Iraq is eliminated. The third aim was to eliminate terrorism, but, just to the contrary, all the efforts increased international terrorism greatly. US determination to bring democracy to the Middle East failed completely because it is not possible to have democratic regimes in the Middle East except for in Turkey and Israel. It is just natural that President Bush will be criticized. Let us criticize but also not forget that we had many corrupt state officials in our history too. Turks controlled not only Iraq but

the whole region for a thousand years but, thanks to corrupt people, now we don't even have the right to talk about Iraq."

TV Highlights
NTV (7 A.M.)

Domestic News

- British Foreign Secretary David Miliband arrived in Turkey Tuesday to meet with President Gul, Prime Minister Erdogan, and Foreign Minister Babacan. Following his talks in Ankara, Miliband will move on to Istanbul for a conference at Bahcesehir University.
- Turkish and Greek Cypriot leaders Talat and Papadopoulos will meet Wednesday at the residence of Michael Moeller, UN Special Representative for Cyprus.
- Former Parliament Speaker Bulent Arinc has been nominated for the post of Speaker of Black Sea Economic Cooperation Assembly.
- The Kurdish DTP has formed a special commission to examine constitutional reforms.

International News

- Iraq's top court confirmed the death sentence for "Chemical Ali" and two other aides of Saddam Hussein convicted of genocide of the Kurds in 1988. They will be executed by hanging within 30 days.
- Sova, a respected Russian human rights group, says 38 people have been murdered and over 300 injured in racist attacks in Russia.

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- The British government has privately issued a complaint with regard to the Chinese-made weapons allegedly being used by Taliban militants against the British troops in Afghanistan.
 - German prosecutors say about 150 tons of rotten meat was sent from Bavaria and used in Berlin to make Turkish-style kebabs.
- WILSON